

THE LEISURE HOUR.

BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,
AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND.—*Couper.*



A TALK WITH COLONEL DEMARCAV.

A YOUNG WIFE'S STORY.

CHAPTER VII.

HIETHERTO the children had dined in the nursery. As the most natural thing, I proposed having them to dine with me at my luncheon-hour. Adams, to whom I mentioned my project on leaving the nursery, and who also seemed ready to give me any information required respecting the habits of the household, looked greatly surprised.

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"It is the usual arrangement when children are young," I observed, perceiving her hesitation.

"Yes, ma'am, it is, in some families. It is, as you say, usual, but Miss Nora is very young, and Master Hubert is troublesome sometimes, and the colonel is not accustomed to have them except when he sends for them, and does not like being put out of his way; and—and Mr. Demarcay likes them to be with the nurse."

My difficulties were taking more formidable dimen-

PRICE ONE PENNY.

sions. All three would be against me; yet I determined to persevere. So much was at stake, both for the children and for me; if, to spare myself conflict and trouble, I did nothing for their training now, I could only expect to reap a harvest of briars and thorns in their indifference and the censure of my own conscience. Resolving to begin to-day, I was leaving my room to seek an interview with my husband when Adams stopped me.

"What is the matter with your hand? It is swollen."

There was a large welt across the back, of which I made light, bathed it for a few minutes in water without gratifying her curiosity, and then, carelessly covering it with my handkerchief, went downstairs and tapped at Victor's door. He was just going out, but invited me to enter. Laying down his hat he gave me a chair and asked what he could do for me, taking, as it seemed to me, especial care to avoid the impoliteness of appearing to be in a hurry. I had come to make a proposition for the benefit of his children, and actually felt half afraid of entering upon the subject. The situation was too ridiculous to last. It seemed best to make a plunge at once.

"You are anxious about the welfare of your children," I began.

By the cold smile that answered me, so different from his usual manner where the little ones were concerned, I knew that Mrs. Grover's adverse influence had been already at work. In spite of that, the subject must be pursued. The children's well-being, as well as my happiness and the peace of the household, were at stake. It would be a plain dereliction of duty to make no effort to draw them sometimes from the nursery, where their improvement was more than doubtful.

"You remember how earnestly you recommended Hubert and Nora to my love and care?" I continued, having a strong impression that I must postpone giving my opinion of the nurse until I had established his confidence in me.

"Yes; I hoped very much from your good sense and temper, and do not think I shall be disappointed," he added, with kindness.

"Not if I can help it; but if any good is to be done I must have opportunities, and those you must make for me. Mrs. Grover may be a little too jealous at first to understand that I seek to benefit her charges; prejudice in her sphere of life is usually as strong as it is unreasoning." Then, by way of anticipating the effect of her strongest weapon of attack, I said, "Step-mothers, you know, are liable to suspicion, and also to have their actions misinterpreted." Victor looked troubled, but asked what I wished him to do.

"I wish to have Hubert and Nora down to dine whilst I lunch."

"Nothing could be more agreeable to me in every way," was the prompt response. "I will not conceal from you that there are difficulties. My uncle does not like to be put out of his ways. Such an arrangement might not be agreeable to him."

"If I secure Colonel Demarcay's consent, you will give the necessary orders to Grover? that is what I want from you. I am going to him now; where shall I find you to communicate the result?"

"I had better prepare Grover to send the children down if you ask for them. Having some distance to ride this morning, I may not be back before luncheon."

The proposition was not altogether agreeable. Success with Colonel Demarcay was uncertain, and the consequent triumph of Grover equally sure. Some few minutes afterwards, on passing Victor's door, not having succeeded in finding the colonel, I met the nurse coming out, and encountered a look of such singular cunning and self-satisfaction that I could not help thinking she had gratified in some way or other her malevolent feelings towards me. When about half an hour later I knocked at Colonel Demarcay's door, I was received with elaborate expressions of gratification.

"You have anticipated me, my dear madam. I mean to-day to signify to you how much pleasure I expected in your company, and ask you to pay me a visit in my dull bachelor quarters."

As he spoke he glanced with no humble eye around the sumptuous room, where every comfort that wealth or ingenuity could devise had been procured. No footfall could be heard on the thick-piled carpet, no noise distract the attention, and no draught penetrate through the rich curtains or closely-fitting windows. In an easy-chair at a table, with letters and papers scattered before him, the colonel was sitting when I entered. He rose immediately, and did not resume his seat until, having well-rounded off his periods of welcome, he left me free to explain the reason of my intrusion.

"And may I not hope that there is some desire to please me also, and that you are willing to give a portion of your time to one whose weakening sight does not permit him to read as formerly, nor to be as independent as he could wish?"

Without knowing how much was implied by it, I expressed a readiness to make myself useful whenever required.

"Very useful you may be to me. I want a secretary such as you," he added, with the courtly smile ever at his command. "You can give me great help in collecting and arranging my notes from different authors, which from long habits of neglect have accumulated."

We were wandering far from the object I had in view, especially as the colonel, rising, showed me an escritoire with several drawers, all of which appeared full of papers. "Do you understand German?" he asked, abruptly.

"A little," I was obliged to answer, though half frightened at the admission.

"Some of these papers are copies of the original text," he observed, "but the greater part are quotations from English translations of German authors. I am glad you know something of German."

"Very little," I repeated, not without dismay, as the prospect of being set to decipher papers on subjects in which I took no interest rose before me. Was I to be Colonel Demarcay's companion, and were the sweet ties of wife and mother to be renounced for weary hours spent in an atmosphere and in a society for which I had no inclination? A sharp pang of resentment shot through my heart against Victor. Why had he not better explained the life for which I was destined? To be his partner—to win him to smiles of confidence and affection, and to know that I was doing something to build up again the home that had been shattered and desolated—with this I would have tried to be content, though the sweet fragrance of a true love might never have been mine. In the vexation induced by these reflections I abruptly left the colonel's side, and, walking

to the window, relieved my mind by drumming against the glass. The impatient movement jarred the colonel's nerves, but not till he spoke did I perceive how much I was irritating his fine sensibilities.

"How old are you, Mrs. Demarcay? Pardon me if the question be indiscreet, mais je crois que cela peut se dire entre nous."

"I am nearly twenty-two." Here I left off the tapping that so annoyed him, and resumed my seat.

"I wish you could have added another decade," he answered.

Ten years more! By that time some changes must have happened; would they be for the better or the worse? I questioned with myself, and a sad presentiment that the years to come would be tinted with darker colours than the present expressed itself involuntarily in a sigh.

"Did you speak?" asked the colonel.

"I did not, but I am going to do so."

The smile I called up was but the melancholy ghost of one, yet Colonel Demarcay did the same, and expressed himself all attention. Partly from shyness, and partly from the colour of my thoughts, the commencement, to say the least, was ungracious, and not likely to please my fastidious auditor. "Now I am here—" (he bowed graciously)—I referred to my entrance into the family, not into his room—"now I am here, there are certain duties which seem to me paramount."

"And they are?" observed the colonel.

"They are connected with the children."

"So large a preface for so small a purpose."

A shade of sarcasm in his voice piqued me into greater earnestness. In a few seconds I poured out my ideas upon the injustice done to step-mothers in general, spoke warmly in their defence, and ended by saying that I meant to give Hubert and Nora the care, consideration, and tenderness of a real mother, concluding with, "They shall not miss her if I can help it."

"That is more than probable; at all events, it is prettily said," was the grave reply, whilst his cold eye, pitiless of my rising colour and embarrassment, examined me with critical acumen. "And what plan have you for their improvement? Of course you have one ready."

The one I then had in view seemed trifling indeed, after the unfortunate way in which I had set about announcing it, but I mentioned it nevertheless. "I wish them to dine with me, at my luncheon. Some break must be made in their habits. I ought not to leave them entirely in the nursery. I ought—"

"To do your duty as a step-mother. I understand, you think it best to begin at the lowest round of the ladder."

"To be perfectly open with you, I foresee that, obstacles will be thrown in the way of any change I make, or improvement I suggest," answered I, without noticing the latent cynicism of his remark, "yet in the interest of my husband's children I must make them. I am not satisfied with Grover."

"Nor am I. Her weekly account is often incomprehensible. I shall be much obliged to you to overlook it and correct her inaccuracies. The children are always having boots and pinnafores—two dozen of the latter at a time. I approve of comfort, but desire to check waste. You will have the kindness to examine her book before I see it."

This was not what I wanted. To be brought into

contact with Mrs. Grover as a reprobate was rather premature, and would be fatal to my gaining the hearts of the children. It was her policy to keep them away from me. Nora's offence this morning, for which her brother had struck her uncensured, was partly for having permitted me to pet her the day before, and partly because she would not promise not to do it again.

"Is she a proper person for her position?" I ventured to ask, emboldened by the colonel's recent admission. Slightly raising his shoulders, he answered, "Victor is infatuated with her because she was fond of his wife, or has succeeded in persuading him so. I beg your pardon, I am speaking of the first Mrs. Demarcay. Once, when I ventured to make an observation respecting her expenses, she carried her cause to Victor, lamenting over my want of confidence, and wondering what would become of the children if she left them. She wept and wailed, until he agreed to settle her account himself, and would have done so had I allowed it. Perhaps you do not know that every expense in this house is borne by me?"

At this point, our interview was interrupted by the announcement of a visitor, one of his large tenants, who, in the absence of my husband, the general arbiter in matters of business, had requested to see Colonel Demarcay. Not sorry to conclude the interview without a positive negative, when I left Colonel Demarcay I took it upon myself to send Grover the message agreed on between me and Victor, namely, to be prepared for the children to dine downstairs. My messenger, Adams, did not, I fancy, meet with a cordial reception, judging from a few desultory remarks dropped by her upon the ignorance and pretension of certain people. Some misgivings I had about the nurse's obedience and my power to exact submission. However, I was mistaken; that was not the annoyance reserved for me. A few minutes before the time the children entered, with clean pinnafores and their hair neatly arranged, looking half shy and half pleased, the latter expression becoming more distinct as some one closed the door behind them. Hubert looked at me less defiantly than hitherto, and when, luncheon being announced, I took Nora by the hand, he ran on before us with a rude energy it was necessary to check. I seated myself with one of them on either side; the servant had just removed the covers when my husband, opening the door, stopped short with palpable surprise. "Papa, papa," they cried out, joyously. "Do come and sit by me," said Nora. Hubert, leaving his chair, ran to seize his father by the hand, and Nora would have done the same had I not prevented her. Though able to make her sit still, I could not quiet the clamour from their little throats, and was truly thankful that Colonel Demarcay was not there to witness my woeful inability to enforce obedience. At first Victor seemed to enjoy the juvenile merriment; it was only when I covered my ears, to exclude the din and screams of shrill voices, that he interfered.

"Enough, enough! children," he said; "if you are brought here by a kind friend, you must not hurt or vex her with your boisterous ways."

It did not escape my notice how ingeniously he avoided giving me the title of my new relationship. My thoughts on the subject were suddenly interrupted by a question from him, and Nora's answer.

"Ella, what have you done to your hand?"

"Uncle struck her with the whip," said the little

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girl, quickly ; and finding that her father listened, she became more communicative. "He meant to beat Hubert, only she put her hand on his shoulder."

"It is nothing—nothing at all; it scarcely hurts me," I replied, drawing my hand away, yet not so quickly but that, to my vexation, Colonel Demarcay, who then entered, must have seen that it had been undergoing examination.

"She was screening Hubert from the effects of disobedience, when she accidentally suffered. I offer Mrs. Demarcay my sincerest regrets, and hope that henceforth she will allow every culprit to answer for himself. I am ready for luncheon, Patrick."

The stern part of the sentence was addressed to Victor for my benefit, the latter to the servant in attendance. The colonel, among his other ailments, was, I discovered, dyspeptic, and always had one or two dishes prepared for him. Whilst he now sat waiting their arrival, a general silence fell upon us all. The children were quiet, casting shy glances at their uncle; Victor's pleasant smiles, and consequently my satisfaction in what I had undertaken, were gone. At this juncture the door opened with a startling suddenness, and Grover, her dark eyes flashing with a fiery brightness, her tall figure looking larger and grander than usual, confronted me.

"What orders has Mrs. Demarcay given about my dinner?"

Orders! I was puzzled how to answer her. I had given none, nor had I thought any necessary.

"Because you did not, I suppose, think I was going to dine with the servants? I, who have had the charge of the children so many years, and whom their poor dear mother liked and trusted. Ah! it was a sad day for them, and for us all, when she was taken, poor lamb. She would often dine with us when the gentlemen were out, and had none of these new ways. My poor dear mistress!"

Ostentatiously wiping her eyes, she turned them upon my husband with a soft, mournful expression. I looked at him too. He was occupied in smoothing the salt in the salt-cellars, and did not raise his head. Finding that he would not speak, I glanced at Colonel Demarcay with no better success. Neither seemed to have an idea that I wanted support or assistance; I was therefore obliged to step at once into my place as mistress. "You can have your dinner in the nursery as usual, and the maid who served you before can continue to do so." Having said this, I went on eating, and Grover, finding that no one else spoke, left the room. If I congratulated myself on having cleverly met a difficulty, my triumph was not of long duration. The luncheon was scarcely finished when the servant informed me that some one wished to speak to me. Imagining it might be some household disquietude respecting Grover, I left the room, unwilling to have auditors since they would not be helpers. A smart-looking young girl met me in the passage, and very decidedly informed me that she was as good as Grover, and "objected to wait upon her," and that she would rather give up her place. And all this had come of my simple innovation on this the first day of my residence in my new home.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE following day being Sunday, after breakfast I asked Victor if the children would go to church with us. There was a slight hesitation, and then he answered that it should be as I wished. With this

concession I went to make the proposition to Grover, and found her, as might be expected, sharp and disagreeable. She thought herself ill-treated the day before, and visited her annoyance upon me, although I had dismissed the young girl who refused to serve her, and requested the housekeeper to send up her dinner comfortably. "Is Colonel Demarcay ill?" I inquired of my husband, when the children joined us, dressed for walking.

"Not that I know of: he is as usual. Why do you ask?"

"Because he has no intention of accompanying us"—for the colonel, after offering me the carriage, had retired to his study with a book in his hand, fetched from the general library, and closed the door.

"Do you regard non-attendance at church as a sign of illness?"

"The only excuse for it," I replied, at which Victor cleared his voice and called to the children to remain near us.

Unintentionally, and unwillingly on my part, we made quite a sensation when we entered the little church of Halstead. There was a general commotion; the occupants stood up and leaned over the high-backed pews as we wended our steps to our own, preceded by Hubert, who boldly led the way, smiling into the faces that were looking down upon him. When seated, I found myself alone at one end of a large carpeted alcove, while Victor, surrounded by the two children, was at the other. He whispered to Hubert, who immediately took his place by me, and behaved tolerably well throughout the service, excepting for signs of weariness evinced during the sermon, which obliged me to reprove him. Nora sat still in her father's arms; I do not say she did not go to sleep, but she gave no trouble. On our return, Colonel Demarcay distressed me by asking how I liked the sermon. I had found it high and dry, and the service rather perfunctorily performed, but having been brought up in a great respect for the clergy, hesitated about giving my opinion, yet ultimately said that I had been accustomed to better preaching.

"There is not very much difference among them," observed the colonel; "a little more or less grace in diction, or more ease in composition, that is all. I never met one who did not walk in the same fetters as his brother. Mr. Kingston is a respectable man in his way, but narrow—narrow—narrow to imbecility!"

Not knowing anything of the gentleman, I could not contest the point, though I wished to do so, Colonel Demarcay's supercilious way of depreciating him having inclined me in his favour. I ventured, however, to remark that as all clergymen dealt with the same subjects, there ought not to be much diversity of views.

"Precisely, I believe you have touched the very spring and secret of the matter."

If the colonel had not bowed with an air indicating that the subject was disposed of, I should not have known what to say; something in the tone of his voice grated on my ear. A meaning underlay his words that I could not seize, and yet it made me doubtful and uncomfortable. Not from a person so opposite in the whole man, both outer and inner, did I expect to find the homely, simple piety of my uncle, but Colonel Demarcay's expressions had a flavour about them that I neither liked nor understood.

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one," I observed, my courage gathering strength from reflection.

"He may; many a good man lives in a fog which he is not able to see through. We will not dispute about Mr. Kingston, we have something more pleasant to do. I see that luncheon is ready. My dear madam—" He presented his arm, and without waiting for the children, we went into the dining-room.

"In the course of the afternoon I shall have the honour of taking you down to the shore," bowed the colonel; "we have a part, a very small part, of the property washed by the sea. I have had a path made from the cliff; the gate is kept locked by my orders to prevent the intrusion of strangers and vagabonds. It is more lonely than distant, which makes me willing to accompany you."

Evidently Colonel Demarcay never thought of my attending the afternoon service, a habit in which I had been reared too systematically to resign without a struggle. Finding by a glance at Victor that he understood my hesitation as little as his uncle, I was obliged to explain myself, and asked him to have the kindness to escort me another day. The coldness of the bow with which my request was received inclined me to regard it more as a token of displeasure than a promise of future compliance.

"Why won't you go now?" said Hubert, who had vociferously claimed permission to join us.

"I am going to church," I blurted out, "and it will be too late afterwards."

"But you have been," said the child, opening wide his wondering eyes; "why must you go again? Papa, papa, never mind her; oh, do take me, do take me and Nora too."

He seized his father's hand as if to drag him there at once, and only desisted on receiving an intimation that he might ask him again in half an hour. At the end of that time I saw them start—Victor and the two children, and Nurse Grover also; Hubert, lithe of heart and limb, running hither and thither, and the others walking and talking. The colonel, offended probably at having his courteous attention declined, retired to his study and his books; a stroll with the children was not in his way; their restlessness and chatter, with no better restraint than their father or nurse, was, as he afterwards told me, too much for his nerves. I was not, however, forgiven when we met at dinner. He was too well-bred to talk at me, but there was a latent sarcasm in all he said, and a hard dry way of treating every subject he handled that made me, and the house too, cold and dreary.

When the day was over and night came I retired to my room, but not to my usual rest. To call it a Sabbath day was a misnomer. Anxieties, little worries, clouds no bigger perhaps than a man's hand, had gathered about me, the easy service I had formerly mistaken for principle being now troubled and faulty. I was not the happier for having been to church. Weakness and insufficiency were oppressing me. Rashly, most rashly, I had undertaken things too hard for me. Captivated by a pleasing exterior, by words upon which I put my own meaning, descriptions of duties that seemed all pleasure, I had entered a family of which I really knew nothing. The atmosphere around me was so cold, my husband usually silent, and Colonel Demarcay—I would rather hear no conversation at all than talk to him. A bride not a week old, had I dared, wil-

lingly would I have gone back to dear, simple Rosewood, and accepted with thankfulness its monotonous life and limited associations.

The next morning I was invited into the colonel's study. The housekeeper was there, and to her I was formally presented as the real mistress of Lorndale: "Capable of giving intelligent, and not impossible orders, like the poor child who was here before."

Mrs. Dixon curtseyed, examining me all the while with a scrutinising, imperturbable gravity, which relaxed a little when I said, "Mrs. Dixon will, I hope, first instruct me as to your tastes, and the habits of the household. I do not wish to make changes ignorantly."

"I wish Grover to send her book to Mrs. Demarcay for the future; she will better understand those mysteries of boots, shoes, and pinafores, that have so often perplexed me. Tell her to do so," said the colonel.

"Certainly, sir."

Mrs. Dixon's smile seemed to express some enjoyment of the commission given her, and made me fear the task now devolving upon me. In a day or two a large parcel was sent to my private sitting-room, with Colonel Demarcay's compliments. It contained the whole furniture of a writing-table, in pale blue leather, with golden-looking clasps and borders, inlaid with onyx and jasper, a case with account-books of the same character, and every other appendage that luxury could invent. This was scarcely admired and arranged on the table, when a servant brought me a small sealed packet—"from the colonel."

With very little of the interest or curiosity natural to youth, I opened it, and found a silver casket of exquisite though ancient workmanship, locked, but with the key attached to the handle, the wards of which seemed extremely complicated. Twice I turned it round, and then the lid flew open with a sharp click, displaying to my wondering sight two compartments filled with gold, and a small morocco rouleau occupying the rest of the space. This held bank-notes, which I did not stop to count, but quickly hid from sight by closing the box. What was all this wealth to me? and what was I to do with it? With a sudden return of my natural vivacity, I rushed to the colonel's study, intending to remonstrate about his splendid gift, and entreat him to resume a part of it; but it was empty, and his own man, who followed me into the room, informed me that his master was out riding.

"When will he return?"

Patrick did not know, but thought he would not be long—an hour or so, no more. Seating myself with the casket before me, I hoped that he would leave me to wait his master's return, which, however, he did not seem disposed to do. Instead of that, he displaced the papers and ornaments lying about, and then put them back again, and finally touched everything once more with his pocket-handkerchief, using it as a duster.

"Perhaps Colonel Demarcay may not like to find me here?" I said at length, perceiving that I was not to be left alone.

"Perhaps not; I can't say. The other Mrs. Demarcay never came here."

The other Mrs. Demarcay! How I longed to hear and know something of my predecessor. Victor had spoken of her as beautiful, Mrs. Grover with un-

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qualified praise, and the colonel as a child giving impossible orders. A very lovely face caught my eye in a picture hanging on the wall, opposite to the chair in which Colonel Demarcay usually sat. Seeing my attention attracted, Patrick went immediately and drew down the blind half-way, so as to place it in a good light. It was that of a nun, clad in brown serge, endeavouring to halt at the top of a flight of steps leading to some dark spot, down which a monk on either side was dragging her, followed by a number of monks, each holding a lighted taper in one hand and a missal in the other, advancing with slow, measured gait, and singing apparently some funeral dirge. The distress and horror vividly painted on that young face, the distended eyes cast upwards in mute appeal to heaven for a help that did not come, the anguish, the mortal agony depicted, that racked the soul to contemplate, and the ferocious expression of her two leaders as they glanced down at her and at each other, made one's heart ache.

A mean-looking, contemptible object at the end of the procession, carrying a basket from which peeped some workman's tools, left no doubt that one of those scenes of bitter irony—*vado in paco*—was about to be enacted. It was so real, so lifelike, that I held my breath as I looked at it, and uttered an audible expression of relief when Patrick, by pulling down the blind, entirely changed the light. Like every one who reads, I knew that such deeds were done in the dark ages, and had felt a passing pang in reading of them. The sight of this picture, however, oppressed me strangely, making me wonder how the colonel could bear to have it continually before him; it was so real, so lifelike, surely it was a portrait. Who could the lady be?

"What is this? Is it a fancy picture?" I asked, with painful interest.

The old man shook his head.

"An over true one, ma'am, though it is hard to believe such things. I still believe in devils," he added, looking cautiously round him as he spoke.

"My master has the original in his castle in Normandy, which he often visits. This is only a copy. It is a family story, all true; it happened about a hundred years ago."

"Was the lady a Demarcay?"

"She was, and she wasn't. She was married to one of the family, but never claimed. Poor lady! her history has done a power of harm. I always say that we can't take one wrong step but it leads to another. Evil is something like the veins in our body; it runs everywhere—into all corners and unlikely places. Who would think, now, that I, Patrick More, am the worse for the pains and sufferings of that sweet unknown beauty whom I never saw, and should never have heard of but for the fate that made me servant to the colonel?"

"Have you lived long with him?" I asked.

"Very long, almost too long," returned the old man with a sigh, "yet I cannot leave him. I saved his life on the battle-field by carrying him off when wounded, in spite of himself; two minutes after we left the spot where he had fallen from his horse, a ball ploughed up the ground. It was a near thing. It might have been better for us if we had stayed—at least for me. No; no one would have old Patrick now, and I have no one to take care of me. I eat the colonel's bread; I must serve him to the end. He should know best, for sure he is a clever man;

anyhow, it is difficult to answer such hard questions as that."

Patrick gave a sorrowful look at the picture, which induced me to ask how that story, more than a hundred years old, could affect his life.

"That appears wonderful to you, and well it may; you think it a great mystery, and yet I could clear it all up in a few minutes if I chose. Maybe that all other mysteries could be explained too; but we must find the key, we must find the key, and Patrick is very ignorant. It would have been well if he had found that out before. Shall I let you know when Colonel Demarcay returns?"

This abrupt transition of subject, in addition to the equally marked change in the demeanour of the old man, who, ceasing his garrulity, became the respectful servant once more, obliged me to restrain my curiosity. Interpreting his question into a hint that I had better not be found in the study on Colonel Demarcay's return, I took up my casket, saying I would find some other opportunity of speaking to his master, and hurried away with additional materials for thought and reflection. Patrick I had noticed from his quiet, serious face when he waited on the colonel at luncheon, the only time in which he appeared in the dining-room. I had met him also on my return from afternoon church; he was walking under the trees of the park at a short distance from my path, with a slow, hesitating gait, and seemed restless and unhappy. Some heavy thought evidently oppressed the old man, though I could not think it had any connection with the picture. He was half Irish and half Scotch, I afterwards ascertained, and probably had the mixed character of the two nations. Inheriting an imaginative, poetic character from his mother, he had possibly woven a few threads of romance out of the nun's history into his own, and was trying to make them agree. Though differing in many respects, both Scotch and Irish peasants are often deeply superstitious. In this simple way I explained it all to my own satisfaction. It was not very long before Patrick, in the fulness of his heart, made other confidences, and unconsciously increased my dissatisfaction with my life at Lorndale, by alienating me further from the one best-disposed towards me.

ANTIQUITY OF MAN.

THE doctrine of man's antiquity appears to have gained, in America as well as in Europe, so much favour amongst men of science, that it requires some courage to call their conclusions in question. But that courage has been exhibited by Mr. J. C. Southall, of Philadelphia, and he has brought a large amount of laborious research to bear upon the subject in a book of six hundred pages, entitled "The Recent Origin of Man." The author is so fully impressed with the importance of bringing facts before his readers, that, at the risk of making his book less readable, he gives facts upon facts beyond what might be deemed necessary to sustain his arguments.

About the time that the book in question was published, Professor Dana, the American geologist, had communicated in Silliman's Journal his conclusions respecting the non-contemporaneity of man with the mastodon of the Missouri. The evidence of Dr. Koch, upon which mainly the belief in their co-existence rested, was pronounced untrustworthy by the

professor after careful examination of all points of that evidence; whilst he expressed it as a probability that evidence of such co-existence might yet be discovered in the northern states, for the southern states he relinquished the belief, and with it that of man's great antiquity in those parts.

Mr. Southall goes further than Professor Dana and gives his reasons for believing that in Europe, as well as in America, the doctrine of extreme antiquity is not supported by sufficient evidence. With the author there is a reverent acceptance of revelation, but with him this does not stand in the way of scientific investigation. He very truly says that "a scientific fact is as much a truth as a text of Scripture," and in the spirit of this sentence he writes his ponderous volume.

The advocates of man's antiquity uniformly contend for the low condition of his origin, and the slow stages by which he reached civilisation, but Mr. Southall, like the learned Canon Rawlinson, whose conclusive papers have lately appeared in the "Leisure Hour," shows that the farthest reach of history brings us to civilisation and not to barbarism, and that behind the historic period, whether in Assyria, Babylonia, or Egypt, there is the dream of the Golden Age, not the strife of savages struggling for existence.

The author has also shown most conclusively that the epochs designated the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age, have no real existence; that "they are only stages of civilisation, not measures of time;" that the Stone Age in one part of the world may have been the Bronze Age in another part and the Iron Age in another, and that sometimes in the same country they so overlapped as to be of very little chronological value.

Amongst the remains of the Swiss lake dwellings at Wauwyl and Moosseedorf some hundreds of stone implements have been found, but no metal. These dwellings would therefore be relegated to the Stone Age, but in Meilen, on the Lake of Zurich, beside the stone implements there was found a bronze celt, thus bringing the Stone and the Bronze Age together. Besides, at Morges, on the Lake of Geneva, an iron poniard was found with bronze celts, bringing together the Bronze and the Iron Age; and to complete the anachronism, at Nidau, on the Lake of Biel, there were secured thirty-three axes of stone, twenty-three bronze axes, together with perforated stones surrounded by a band of iron, iron spear-heads, and pottery; and at Estavayer, on the east bank of the Lake of Neufchâtel, there were two pile dwellings, in one of which there were only stone implements, but at the other, besides stone celts there was found a knife with a bronze handle and an iron blade. If these are facts, and the authorities are given for every statement, what conclusion can we reach but that any measurement of time made by these supposed epochs must necessarily lead to error?

Mr. Southall shows also that the tumuli speak the same language, for in 1822 a perforated stone axe and an iron axe, with other implements, were found in cutting through the tumulus near Claughton Hall, Lancashire, in which we have together the two extremes, the stone and iron implements; also in a barrow on Ashford Moor was found an iron arrow-head, with implements of flint, and at Moor Low six rude instruments of stone, a bronze lance-head, iron knives, and glass beads.

If, then, the epochs of Iron, Bronze, and Stone have

no actual existence as successive periods, or are confined to Denmark, where the distinction first arose, then the steps by which we have been led back to the Neolithic and Palæolithic periods have been removed.

The Palæolithic period is described by Sir John Lubbock as the time when man shared the possession of Europe with the mammoth, the cave-bear, the woolly-rhinoceros, and other extinct mammalia—designated the Drift period, and this is placed at about 200,000 years back. But the author of the volume before us brings evidence to show that the extinct mammalia had lived on to much more recent times; indeed, far into the time of man's acknowledged existence by even the Usher chronology.

The statements of Mr. Southall respecting the antiquity of temple building and other stone erections in India receives confirmation from the recent work of Mr. James Fergusson,* in which he says that if we are to trust to traditional, or mythological, or ethnological coincidence, it is rather to Babylonia than to Egypt that we should look for the *incunabula* of what are found in Southern India. Mr. Fergusson had also stated, in 1872, that up to the time of Asoka, 250 B.C., the architecture of India was in wood, and wood only, and that previous to that date stone, as a building material, either rude or hewn, was unknown in that country;† and that from inscriptions and other data it is evident that the date of even the rock-cut temples of Ellora and Elephanta cannot be carried further back than the second century B.C.‡

In a critique upon Mr. Southall's book, which appeared in the "Spectator,"§ the writer says of it, that "it contains a whole library of counter-evidence and criticism, directed especially against Sir Charles Lyell's 'Antiquity of Man.'" It seems rather uncertain how far this counter-evidence has affected the mind of the reviewer, for he commends the book whilst he stops short of accepting its conclusions. He says: "The best part of the book is that which collects arguments for the recency of man. The same line of reasoning is more concisely worked out in a paper read this year by Mr. S. R. Pattison at the Victoria Institute." The reviewer loosely claims twenty thousand years for man's age on the earth. But to speak of twenty thousand years for the age of man would have been to the mind of Sir Charles Lyell, or to any geologist who had accepted the doctrine of man's antiquity, virtually giving up the point of contention. And still more markedly would this be the case where the doctrine of evolution has been received; for many millions of years would be required for the development of man from protoplasm by the evolution theory: a period so long that Sir William Thompson, arguing upon physical grounds, says that no such length of time could be possible in the past history of the earth. Whatever there might be in archaeology or ethnology, there is nothing in geology that would distinguish between twenty thousand years and the age of man as computed by Usher.

Mr. Southall very wisely does not commit himself to the chronology of either Archbishop Usher or Dr. Hales, nor does he claim a Bible chronology, for strictly speaking there is no Bible chronology. There are certain historic facts related in the Bible, and some

* History of India and Eastern Architecture. By James Fergusson. 1876.

† Rude Stone Monuments, p. 48.

‡ Ibid. p. 404.

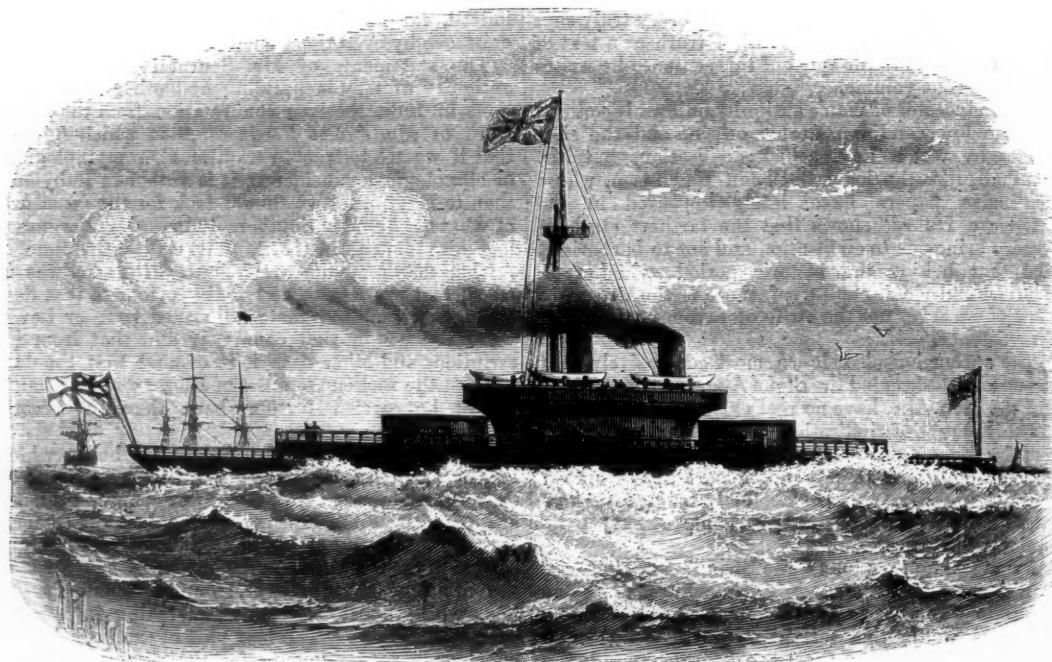
§ November 27th, 1875.

approximate calculations as to time may be made from these facts; but the Bible is not to be held responsible for the correctness of these calculations, as it contains no unbroken chronological table. Whilst the facts referred to will not admit of anything like the geological antiquity claimed for man,

viz., that of 200,000 years, or that of 20,000 named by the reviewer, yet within certain limits there may be room for either a contraction or extension of time that may not accord with either Archbishop Usher or Dr. Hales, and yet offer no antagonism to the Bible record.

T. K. C.

OUR IRONCLADS.



H.M.S. DEVASTATION.

[By permission of Symonds, Photographer, Portsmouth.]

IRON ships of war are not pretty to look at—that is plain without argument. But they have a magnificence of strength which constitutes a beauty in itself; and one cannot but feel, when looking at them, that even if they are ugly, they are so because they typify in the highest degree the spirit and the power of horrid and un-Christian War. The beauty of their strength is a thing apart, and it is in this light that we would fain have our readers regard them. Our sense of national security will be largely increased after an inspection of these ships; and when we consider that Devastations and Thunderers, under the British flag, are intended to represent the order-keeping policeman rather than the aggressive soldier, we shall conclude that if there are to be police at all it is better to have them irresistible, and that the surest way to insure the house against violence is for a strong man armed to keep it. The type of the strong-armed man who is to keep foes from these shores, is well shown in the Devastation, most aptly named. This ship is at the time of writing the most powerful war ship in commission, whether in English or foreign waters. In company with her sister ship, the Thunderer—on board of which took place the terrible boiler explosion a few months back—she would be a match for any number of

broadside ships that liked to attack her; and when these mighty ones are supplemented by the yet heavier-armed Dreadnought, and by the Inflexible, built on much the same pattern, but armed with eighty-one ton guns instead of thirty-five and thirty-eight ton guns, they will be able to show front against any possible combination of foreign navies.

It is remarkable to what great perfection naval architects have attained in constructing these ships, when it is borne in mind that only fifteen years have elapsed since the first attempt was made to build on the turret plan. After much debate and many doubtings, the order was given, in 1862, to adapt the Royal Sovereign as a turret ship, on the principle so long advocated by the late Captain Coles. Deep was the grief which the order inspired among the devotees of broadside ships, and deep also was the regret with which admirers of the old lines of beauty in a ship saw the fine three-decker cut down and converted into a floating battery. In the Prince Albert, an iron ship then under construction, turrets were introduced, and these ships, with their fine fixed turrets and their guns drawn inboard, were the earliest specimens of the new style.

It is foreign to the purpose of the present paper, even if the limits of an article gave the space, to

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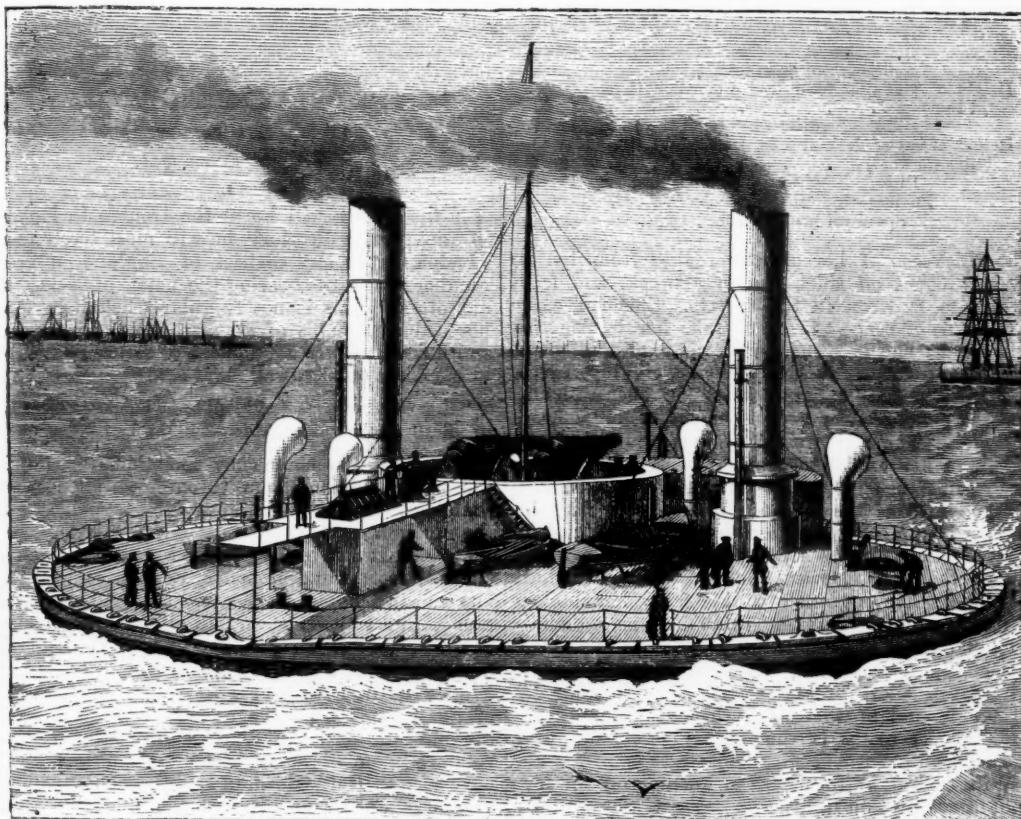
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describe the successive changes which took place in the design of turret or "monitor" ships in the interval. It may be as well, however, to state that the number of turrets has been reduced in all the more recent ships to two, and that mobility of the turret, so as to give an opportunity of firing sideways or fore-and-aft, has superseded the idea of fixed turrets. To compensate for the reduced number of guns, cannon of larger weight have been given; while the resist-

of injury capable of being compassed by the heaviest guns.

Upon this plan vessels of the Glatton, Cyclops, Magdala, and Abyssinia class were built, with fair speed, but very light draught of water, for the purpose of lying close in shore, and defending harbours, creeks, and rivers. Indeed, it was thought at one time that the use of mastless turret-ships would be confined exclusively to this object, and that it would



THE RUSSIAN CIRCULAR SHIP, POPOFF (120 feet in diameter, 640 horse-power).

ing power of the ship has been enormously increased by the growth of the armour, from four and a half to eighteen inches, in thickness. Masts, spars, and sails have vanished from the decks of these great war ships, and superstructures calculated to catch the wind, retain the in-thrown sea, and to give a better target to an enemy, have also disappeared.

Though there are ships which combine the turret principle with sailing power (as in the Monarch), experience has shown that they are poor sailers and embarrassed fighters; and the case of the unfortunate Captain, which was a ship of this kind, went seriously to impair confidence in the plan. In carrying out the idea to its full extent, it was found necessary to carry it out in one direction only, and to depend wholly on the engines as the motive power of the ship. The care of naval architects was then confined to devising a ship which should be so protected in all vulnerable parts as to enable it to withstand the fire of the most powerful artillery; at the same time that it was furnished with the means of moving speedily about, and of inflicting the greatest amount

be perfectly impossible to send them to sea. But the designers of the Devastation, Thunderer, Dreadnought, and Inflexible had other opinions, at least to this extent, that they have been able to provide a ship capable of going fourteen knots an hour, capable of stowing 1,600 tons of coal, and capable of carrying, behind the thickest armour used, four of the huge 81-ton guns, whose exploits at Shoeburyness excited so much wonder last October. Further, they have succeeded in enabling such monsters to go to sea with perfect safety; and though it is probable that ships dependent for their motive power on their engines only will never be allowed to go ocean-cruising alone, the Devastation has proved her ability to go unaided from Portsmouth to Malta, and to face seas in the Mediterranean which other ships would regard as formidable. She has ridden out gales in perfect safety, and is pronounced by those on board to be more comfortable, and less liable to pitch or roll, than ships with high bulwarks, masts, or other projections into the air. As adjuncts to a fleet, such ships are simply invaluable, and of all the fleet

under Sir James Drummond's command in Besika Bay this autumn and winter, none has more thoroughly represented British force and determination than the ship of which we write.

The principal dimensions of the Devastation are as follows:—

	Feet. In.
Length between the perpendiculars	285 0
Extreme breadth	62 3
Depth in hold	18 0
Burthen in tons, 4,406.	
Draught of water (forward)	26 3
" (aft)	27 1
" (mean)	26 8
Displacement in tons, 9,298.	
Height of port-sills from load water-line (fore turret)	12 11
Ditto ditto (after turret)	12 7
Height of upper deck at side, from load water-line (forward)	8 6
Ditto ditto (amidships)	10 9
Engines—Indicated horse-power, 6,633.	
Speed per hour, in knots, 13·84.	

The thickness of her armour ranges from ten to twelve inches on sides and breastwork, and from twelve to fourteen in the turrets. She can carry 1,600 tons of coal—enough to take her to America and back; she is armed with four 35-ton guns, capable of firing shot and shell weighing 700lb. each, at a velocity equal to about 900 miles an hour; and she is manned by a complement of 329 officers and men. The total weight of her armour is 2,581 tons, and her total displacement, with guns, stores, and equipment on board, is equal to 9,298 tons.

Some idea of the cost of these vessels may be gathered from the fact that the Dreadnought (late Fury), which is of the same type, but thirty-five feet longer than the Devastation, cost for her hull £400,000; her engines cost £70,000; her boilers £30,000; and there is the value of guns, ammunition, and stores to be added to these sums. Yet the cost of the Devastation, exclusive of artillery and stores, fell short of the cost of the Minotaur by £140,000, and of the Monarch and Hercules by £40,000, so costly is the luxury of being well defended.

With such powerful means of keeping off the foe, or of attacking him in his own seas, it may well be asked what foreign nations have done in the same way. The Americans, from whom the first idea of a monitor or iron-clad battery came, have a few ships of the class; but they are on an antiquated model, and quite unable to cope with the ships of which we are writing. The French and Germans have not yet launched out into this kind of construction, and the few specimens owned by the Dutch and Italians are at present not formidable. The Italians have one great ship in course of building which they mean to arm with 100-ton guns. This when finished will be the most powerful war ship of the day, but meantime the Russians are the only people who have attempted in practice to rival our own dockyards.

Admiral Popoff invented a design on which two circular ships—named Popoffkas, after him—were constructed. These vessels are circular in form, have guns in an unroofed turret, and are slow in speed, the highest being ten or eleven knots. They are intended solely for coast and river defence, and could never come out to fight a fleet. They are liable to capture by boats dashing at and boarding them, and they are very liable to be run down and sunk by any resolute ironclad that will ram them.

The Peter the Great, which is larger than the Devastation, but in other respects like her, is the only real competitor of our English seagoing, mastless ironclads. She was completed in great haste, and at great cost, in October last, with a view to her going to the Mediterranean to strengthen the Russian ships there. But after starting on her journey she was recalled to Cronstadt; and there she will remain till the spring releases her by thawing a passage.

THE GREAT SMITH FAMILY:

LINEAL AND COLLATERAL.

BY EDWIN PAXTON HOOD.

I.

IF the reader will be at the trouble to look over any postal directory, he will most likely find in London, or in any district of England, a greater number of persons bearing the name of Smith than any other. This is not singular when it is remembered that probably of all mechanics or workers the smith stands at the foundation of society, as Gilbert, in his poem on Cornwall, says:—

“ From whence came Smith, all be he knight or squire,
But from the smith that forges in the fire ? ”

Disguised the name may sometimes be, but it is the most common name throughout all European countries. It does sometimes affect a spelling above the common, and appears as Smyth, Smythe, or de Smythe. It also in England assumes a Latin guise (from *ferrum*), and becomes Ferrier and Ferrars, one of the noble names of England, associated also with a tragedy not noble either in its character or consequences. In Germany we have the Schmidts; in Italy the Fabri, Fabricia, or Fabbroni. In France the Le Febres or Lefevres. Although most of the European languages adhere more closely to the old northern name, even in Latin we have volumes in our library by Johannes Smithus, and we have seen in Italy Giovanni Smitti. The Spaniard's version of John Smith is Juan Smithus; the Dutchman adopts it as Hans Schmidt; the French soften it into Jean Smeets; the Russian roughens it into Jouloff Smitowski. John Smith goes into the tea trade with China, and then he becomes Jahne Shimmit. Among the Icelanders he is Jahne Smithson; among the Tuscaroras he is Tom Qu Smittia; in Poland, Ivan Schmittiaveiski; among the Welsh we are told they talk of Jihom Schmild; in Mexico he is written down as Joutli F'Smitri; among the classical ruins of Greece he becomes Ion Sinilton; in Turkey he is almost lost sight of as Yoe Seef. Philology also assures us that those ancient names of the kings of Syria, Hadad and Benhadad, are the equivalents of our Smith and Smithson, just as the terms pontiff or pontifex point back to the time when the chief man was he who built bridges or constructed roads; so, at last, these and the like terms we have quoted came to be considered the proudest designations of the royal house; and when the usurper, the founder of another family, seized the throne, he assumed the same honoured titles associated with distinguished benefits conferred on the country.

Such are some of the variations of this great

family ; but this is really only the commencement, the great stem of the family tree. There are innumerable collateral branches—the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths ; the Whitesmiths, Brownsmiths, the makers of the great old brown bills ; the Arrowsmiths, the makers of the arrows ; the Nasmyths, the makers of nails. There are also Spearsmiths and Shoesmiths, and probably many more than we have the knowledge or time fairly to indicate ; all, however, showing how large, and perhaps rather popular than princely, rather democratic than aristocratic, this family is and has been ; how the smith not only stands with his hammer by the forge at the foundation of society, but how by his manifold works he is found through all the various ways by which society advances. Thus we find him in the oldest records of our race, in Genesis, in the person of Tubal Cain, the first instructor of every artificer in brass and iron. Josephus, in his "Antiquities," says he was the first who invented the art of making brass ; and learned scholars, arguing, perhaps, greatly from the similarity of the names, have identified him as the same person who meets us in the Greek mythology under the name of Vulcan. So important a person was the smith in the earliest ages, that when a nation was conquered he was removed out of the land, as we read both in the book of Judges and the first book of Samuel. The Philistines, effectually to disable the Hebrews, removed the smith, and compelled the conquered people to go down to them to sharpen their coulters, and, of course, to purchase them. And so, in the beautiful description of the various trades in the book of Ecclesiasticus, we read, "So every carpenter and workmaster that laboureth night and day, and they that cut and grave seals, and are diligent to make great variety, and give themselves to counterfeit imagery, and watch to finish a work ; the smith also, sitting by the anvil, and considering the iron work, the vapour of the fire wasteth his flesh, the noise of the hammer and the anvil is ever in his ears ; without these cannot a city be inhabited, and they shall not dwell where they will, nor go up and down, but they will maintain the state of the world." Thus the blacksmith welds society together, and without him can be neither swords nor ploughshares ; neither nails nor knives, nor any of those more amazing engines which give comfort and convenience to men, or which condense and carry on by their vehement strength the forces which rule the nations of the world.

One of the most pleasant little excursions of Handel, that master of harmony, in the more ordinary tenour of his great genius, is a piece called the "Harmonious Blacksmith." Charles Dickens, in his "Great Expectations," has represented Joe, the blacksmith—one of the sweetest and simplest of his characters—as perpetually ringing it out at his anvil and forge ; and in the little village of Whitchurch, or Little Stanmore, near Edgware, London, they still keep up the tradition that the Harmonious Blacksmith was a real character, and lived there. It is also popularly supposed that Handel himself was for some time the parish organist, but the real state of the case is that he was *maestro di capella*, or chapel master, for two years, at Canons, the famous mansion of the Duke of Chandos. The chapel has long ago disappeared, but Handel's organ is still in use in Trinity Church, Gosport. All this, and much besides, concerning Handel at Canons has been learnedly and pleasantly told by Dr. Rimbault, in the "Leisure

Hour" for November, 1875. The good people of Little Stanmore nevertheless hold the tradition that Handel was their parish organist, and they lately have refreshed the memory of the blacksmith by renewing his tomb in the churchyard, which bears the subscription, "In memory of William Powell, the Harmonious Blacksmith, who was buried here 27th February, 1780. He was parish clerk during the time the immortal Handel was organist of this church." It is said that it was from the melodious sound of his anvil that the great composer took the first idea of his beautiful composition. The stone has a design showing anvil and hammer, with the musical characters B and E flat in a stave.

Perhaps, as we listen to Handel's light and cheerful refrain, we may be permitted to think that the blacksmith was wiser than he knew ; if Milton conceived the building of his Pandemonium "rising to the sound of flutes and soft recorders," a much more natural, and quite as practical, conception it is to imagine kingdoms, with all their laws and societies, arts and arms, rising to the cheerful ringing and the harmonious clang of the blacksmith's hammer.

Blacksmiths have very frequently seemed to deserve, however, the reputation of being only the rugged handicraftsmen of society, something like one who is immortalised through the humour of Erasmus, to whom the great wit and scholar dedicated that book which Loyola and the Jesuits have hated so vehemently, the "Enchiridion, or the Christian Soldier's Dagger." It was written, he says, especially to aim at the conversion of a friend who, while professing to be religious, was an exceedingly intemperate character, and sometimes brutally illtreated his wife. John, the gunsmith, appears to have been this worthy who has thus attained to such an ill-conditioned immortality. To him Erasmus afterwards, in a later period of his life, referred, saying, "He gave me a sword, and I gave him a book, the 'Enchiridion, or Spiritual Sword.' I have not yet made use of his present, nor he, I fancy, of mine."

Few of the great poems of the world are more famous than that great ancient German poem which tells the story of Siegfried the Swift, and how he grew up to be a hero ; how, in the wilderness, he fell in with the giant smith, and learned himself to become a smith ; how he was inspired by the story of Miener, the smith who told him of the adventures of Weiland, the greatest of all smiths and armourers—it is the greatest story of Germany ; how Siegfried, the warrior smith, went forth to the Drachenfels and liberated the beautiful Chriemheld from the dragon, afterwards marrying her. This story contains the core of all German legend, and wonderful truths seem to look out from these old shadow paintings. Just as the old Greeks made Vulcan, the uncouth, strong, rugged blacksmith, to marry Venus, so both Greek and German legend seem to teach that the fair success, the victory over the beauties and graces of life, can only be won by a sturdy wrestling, and strong, brave overcoming of dangers and difficulties. Thus it may be said that gold derives its value from iron ; it assuredly derives all its value from the smith, who moulds it into the representative of value and beauty. But what is the worth in society of gold compared with iron ? The rugged iron-master goes before and achieves such work as we see going on in the mighty smelting furnaces and the great smiths' shops and sheds of our country, where he is working like a Siegfried, with his giants around him, and

then afterwards come those refining graces represented by the decorations and ornaments which the goldsmith works as a coronet for the iron king.

Many of those families which now boast not only of their eminence, but remote ancestry, when traced to their origin show an emanation from very lowly labourers. We have an illustration of this in the names of some of those founders of noble families who came over with William the Conqueror; but pertinent to our present paper occurs the house of Mulgrave and Normanby. The earldom of Mulgrave, the marquisate of Normanby, date, and at no very remote period, from James Phips, a gunsmith in Bristol. The son of the old gunsmith, William, one of the youngest of twenty-six children, of whom twenty-one were sons, was, as the Italians say, "a son to his own labours." He began life as a blacksmith and ship-carpenter, managed to settle himself in this way in business, but afterwards, and whilst yet a young man, pushed out into a wonderful world of enterprise on the seas and in Spanish America. His wonderful story—and wonderful it really is—is told by Cotton Mather in the "Magnalia Christi Americana." The son of the gunsmith became Governor of Massachusetts and Sir William Phips, and thus laid the foundation of a noble family, the members of which played their part as great lawyers, chancellors, soldiers, and statesmen.

The blacksmith and his hammer have been the frequent subjects of poetry and song. Homer, in his well-known magnificent description in the "Iliad" of Vulcan at his forge, and Dante, in his not less celebrated description of the works of the great arsenal of Venice, would both furnish fine lines for quotation. Of modern writers, Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith" is everywhere known. It is not only one of the finest songs of labour, but perhaps the best song we have in honour of the smith:—

" Under a spreading chesnut tree
The village smithy stands,
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands ;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow ;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes ;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close ;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught !
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought ;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought !"

A humbler minstrel sings, in words not altogether unknown:—

" The soldier may boast of his grandeur and glory,
And tell of the thunders that rolled o'er the field ;
He may hold up his weapon, all dripping and gory,
And sing of the splendours that shone on his shield ;
But we have no battle-song breathing of clamour ;
We hold up no weapon all dripping with gore !
So, a song for the hammer ! the old iron hammer !
The hammer shall conquer when swords are no more !

The banner may face it, the trumpet before it
May bray forth its praises with loud brazen breath ;
But we only sing of the dark shadow o'er it,
Its pathway of ruin, of danger, and death :
While the soldier, be-sworded, may lift up the banner,
We'll tell him the blacksmith must glory restore !
So, a song for the hammer ! the old iron hammer !
The hammer shall conquer when swords are no more !

Round the forge in the village the blacksmiths are singing ;
A hammer is fashioned,—lo ! there where it lies :
In the far distant forest the anvils are ringing ;
On the waste and the desert the proud cities rise.
Thou ancient truth-bringer, thou mighty world-tamer,
Great symbol of labour, triumphant once more !
All hail to the hammer ! the old iron hammer !
The hammer shall conquer when swords are no more !"

One of the finest occasional lyrics is Fergusson's "Forging of the Anchor," in which he sings how—

" Fitfully you still may see the grim smiths ranking round,
All clad in leathern panoply, their broad hands only bare :
Some rest upon their sledges here, some work the windlass
there."

They

" Swing their strokes in order, and foot and hand keep time ;
Their blows make music sweeter far than any steeple's chime."

Nor must we forget Schiller's wonderful "Lay of the Bell," in which he, very much in the spirit of a remark we made some few paragraphs back, seems to make its casting the illustration and interpretation of all the stages of society :—

" What friend is like the might of fire,
When man can watch and wield the ire ?
Whate'er we shape or work, we owe
Still to that heaven-descended glow."

Charles Mackay has very vigorously sung the deeds of Tubal Cain ; and the song, as it has been set to music, has really found a very considerable echo both in England and America :—

" Old Tubal Cain was a man of might
In the days when earth was young ;
By the fierce red light of his furnace bright
The strokes of his hammer rung :
And he lifted high his brawny hand
On the iron glowing clear,
Till the sparks rushed out in scarlet showers,
As he fashioned the sword and spear."

Then the poet sings how, as he wrought by his roaring fire, he supplied the people with weapons sharp and strong in exchange for pearls and gold ; then, how a sudden change came over the heart of the old blacksmith for the evil that he had done, as he saw men filled with rage and hate ; how for many a day he brooded, and forbore to smite the iron, while his furnace smouldered low, and then how, at last, he sung,—

"Hurrah! for my handy-work,
And the red sparks lit the air;
Not alone for the blade was the bright steel made,
And he fashioned the first ploughshare!"

One of the most pleasant objects in an old primeval village neighbourhood is the sight of the blacksmith's forge, as well known on the canvases of painters as we have seen it to be in the lines of poets. One of the most pleasant of sounds amongst rural scenes is the click and the ring of the hammer on the anvil. Often, in the closing autumn evening or on the winter afternoon, how cheerfully the red light shines through the village or over the waste. When we were young, how pleasant it was to stop in the blacksmith's shop, and to see him and his men mysteriously fashioning things out of the fire; also, an appreciated recreation, if we were permitted to take our stand at the bellows and blow up the ruddy flames to a roaring heat, while he, with his long tongs, turned the red bar of iron about until it was sufficiently in a glow itself to be brought forth to the anvil; and then how the hot sparks danced about, and while we got out of the way of them, how he stood fearlessly plying away with his hammer, quite as careless of them as the thresher whilst his flail drove off the chaff, as Longfellow says, "from the summer threshing-floor."

The pleasure to which we have referred, when as children coming home from school we looked in at the open door or took a blow at the bellows in the smithy, far more illustrious characters have experienced. When the Emperor Joseph was travelling in Italy the tire of one of the wheels of his carriage broke on the road. Having reached with much difficulty the next village, he alighted at the blacksmith's door, and directed him to repair immediately the damage which prevented him continuing his journey. "I would willingly do it," said the smith, "but it is a *fête* day, every one is at mass, and I have no one even to blow the bellows." "Do not let that hinder you," said the emperor, "for I will blow them myself, and the exercise will warm me." The monarch accordingly worked at the bellows, the blacksmith forged, and the fracture was soon repaired. "How much is there to pay?" "Six sous." Joseph placed six ducats in the man's hand and went away; but the honest workman ran after him and said, "Sir, you have made a mistake, and given me a six-ducat piece, and I couldn't get change for it in all the village." "Change it where you please. I give you what is over the six sous for the pleasure I have had in blowing the bellows."

John Campbell was a redoubted sort of man in his way, author of "*The Martyr of Errromanga*," and a fiery religious journalist and editor, a worthy man, very well known to the writer of this paper. He had been a blacksmith, and whilst he worked at his forge beneath the shadows of old St. Andrew's University he attended the classes, and drilled himself in Latin and Greek. When he was a little over seventy years of age, a handsome testimonial was presented to him by the Earl of Shaftesbury, at the instance of a number of friends; the testimonial was a gift of three thousand pounds. The writer was present at the meeting, and fell into conversation with an old minister who had known Campbell in the old St. Andrew's blacksmith and student days. Another friend, standing by, said, "And what did you think of his character then?" "Why," replied the old

man, "he laid stout blows on the red-hot iron, and he did not care where the sparks went." It was a very good description, not only of John Campbell, but of most of those children of the smithy, whether they have continued at their work by the forge, or have come out to a more public life of labour and conflict among men.

A blacksmith's shop has often been a romantic spot, especially it used to be the great gossiping-shop of the village, the place where the newspaper was read and its subjects discussed. Sir John Herschel, some forty years since, in his opening address to the Mechanics' Institute at Windsor, mentions the instance of a blacksmith who, by the light of his forge, night after night, read to all his neighbours in the village one of Richardson's works through; and Sir John mentioned how—the incident happened when he was quite a child—as the story passed along through the successive stages of the heroine's various escapes from the plots spread around her, the feelings of the rustic audience manifested themselves in bursts of applause as if they were listening to some real story; and when the tale reached its consummation, there was a loud cheer of triumph, and a rush to ring a merry peal on the parish bells, over what they conceived to be virtue rewarded, mingled with regret that the story was brought to a close. We also met with a similar, perhaps more interesting incident, in the Border country. Upon the first publication, from week to week, of "*Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*," a blacksmith was wont to ride on horseback some several miles weekly to fetch the number from the nearest town; and upon his return he was anxiously expected to read its essays and tales to his neighbours while sitting on his anvil. Thus the blacksmith's shop, fifty years ago and more, seems to have been often a kind of mechanics' institute in its day. A dear old friend of ours, an old lady now living, verging towards her eightieth year, has often told us how, when she was a young girl—newspapers were very rare and scarce things then—her father was the squire of a village in Hampshire, the times were very exciting, the means of information very few, so she took her father's newspaper, probably the only one which made its appearance in the village, and went down to the blacksmith's shop, where "the young miss" was regularly expected and hailed, to read out to all the neighbours of the village the account of "the war," "the news from Lunnon," and other interesting pieces from abroad and at home. Such are some of the collateral circumstances connected with what may be called the poetry of the Smith family.

But we must set before our readers some more particular instances illustrating its greatness of aim. We must not detain our readers with idle nonsense; but there were ages when the story of St. Dunstan was believed. He appears to have been a blacksmith, who, working at his forge, and being much disturbed by the devil, having vainly attempted to drive him away with a stick, and then with a stone, and still finding him troublesome, seized hold upon his nose with the red-hot tongs from the forge, and made him, says the legend, dance with pain. This was a right famous story among the legends of the Romish Church. The mention of it now seems rather offensive to Papists, but Dr. Southey very learnedly shows, in his "*Vindication of the Book of the Church*," how famous it was once; and Dr. Lingard,

THE GREAT SMITH FAMILY.

the Romish historian of England, scarcely seems to disbelieve it; and elegant scholars of the Romish Church, quoted by Dr. Southey, have exercised their pens in eulogising the assuredly very wonderful transaction. A prettier and more trustworthy old Church story is associated with the arms of the city of Mayence. Willigis, an ancient archbishop of Mayence, was the son of a blacksmith and wheelwright, and when he was elevated to be the archbishop of his native city he was received with scorn on account of his lowly origin; so out of the crowd he called a painter to emblazon over the porch and door of his palace and cathedral a wheel, adopting it as his crest, that he might never forget the lowliness of his origin in moving amongst princes; and the bravery of the action was so admired by the city that it adopted the blacksmith's wheel for its coat-of-arms.

When Mr. Boulton, in an interview with George III, was attempting to explain to the king the nature of steam and some of the great improvements it had effected, and which it was yet destined to effect, we, perhaps, need not feel any contempt for his Majesty's sagacity if, in such an early period of the monarchy of steam, the king was puzzled, and exclaimed, "But, Mr. Boulton, sir, what—what—what do you make? What is it you make?" And Mr. Boulton, with modesty, but with great dignity, replied, "Please, sire, your Majesty, we make what all kings are fond of—power! power!" Every development of the blacksmith's art, from the most insignificant to the most magnificent, shows an increase of power. That was an advance in power when men began to shoe their horses. But who did it first? We do not know; it is not certain; it does not seem probable that the practice was known to the Greeks and Romans. Some of the old writers tell us that camels were furnished with shoes made of ox leather; all that the ancients could do was to provide horses with hoofs, as Isaiah says, "like flints." Expedients were adopted to harden the hoofs; but what a bold attempt was that to nail a piece of iron to the foot of a horse! It is said that William the Conqueror first introduced the practice of shoeing horses into England; and it is a singular circumstance that the town of Northampton, from some old records, appears to have been as famous in its day for providing horse-shoes, as in recent times it has become for providing the leather ones for bipeds. Of course there are many regions where still the horse, although in use, is unshod; and although in some old graves, among the Germans and Vandals, horse-shoes have been found, the extent of their antiquity is unknown. Who made the first knife? This was a great achievement in manufactures. Who made the first nail? What a useful invention was a pin! unknown in England, we believe, until 1543; then imported from France, and first used by Catherine Howard, the unfortunate wife of Henry VIII. But a walk through the great Museum of Antiquities in Copenhagen, the most celebrated and noteworthy of such museums in any nation, tells a wonderful story of the very high antiquity of innumerable instruments and ornaments, wrought in some singular way by the art of the smith, all revealing the curiously-inventive and original genius of man in taking captive the forces and most obdurate things of Nature, and making them subservient to his ideas or necessities.

Of course the missionary, as he goes to foreign and savage people, to "open the blind eyes and to turn

from darkness to light," finds in his efforts to civilise a mighty agency in the exercise of the powers of the blacksmith. Robert Moffat, in his labours in South Africa, gives a humorous description of his first efforts as blacksmith. It was imperative, in order to the prosecution of one of his mission journeys, that some smith and carpenter work should be done, but, says the missionary, "We had neither carpenters nor smiths on the station, and I was unacquainted with these trades myself. After ruminating for a day or two on what I had seen in smiths' shops in Cape Town, I resolved on making a trial. I got a native bellows made of goat's skin, to the neck of which were attached the horns of an elk, and at the other end two parallel sticks were fastened, which were opened by the hand in drawing it back, and closed when pressed forward, but making a puffing like a broken-winded creature; the iron was only red-hot after a great perspiration, and I found I must give it up as a bad job, observing to the chief that if I must accompany him, it must be on the back of an ox. Reflecting again, however, on the importance of having a waggon, and Africaner evidently not liking to go without one, I set my brains again to work to try and improve on the bellows, for it was wind I wanted. Though I had never welded a bit of iron in my life, there was nothing like *try*. I engaged the chief to have two goats killed—the largest on the station—and their skins prepared entire, in the native way, until they were as soft as cloth. These skins now resembled bags, the open ends of which I nailed to a circular piece of board, in which was a valve. One end of the machine was connected with a fire, and had a weight on it to force out the wind, when the other end was drawn out to supply more air. The apparatus was no sooner completed than it was put to the test, and the result answered satisfactorily in a steady current of air, and I soon had all the people around me to witness my operations with the new-fangled bellows. Here I sat, receiving their praises, but heartily desiring their departure, lest they should laugh at my burning the first bit of iron I took in my hands to weld. A blue-granite stone was my anvil; a clumsy pair of tongs, indicative of Vulcan's first efforts; and a hammer never intended for the work of a forge. My first essay was with some trepidation, for I did not like so many lookers-on. Success, however, crowned my efforts, to the no small delight of the spectators. Having finished what was necessary for the waggon, I was encouraged to attempt the repairs of some gun-locks which were as essential for the comfort and success of the journey as the waggon. In doing this, I began with one which I thought I could not spoil should I not succeed, and accomplishing that, I was able to put the others in order; but in doing this I had, for the want of steel, to sacrifice two of my files, which in my situation was a sacrifice indeed." What a peep this graphic little incident seemed to furnish of the first rude efforts of primeval man in coping with the mysteries of fire, and making it the minister to his necessities in the conquest of iron. Similar attempts and successes are narrated also in the enterprises of John Williams—himself, we believe, originally a blacksmith. He also tells the story of his construction of a new pair of bellows, but this was when he was engaged in the ambitious feat of building a ship, for, as he says, "It is well known that little can be done towards the building of a ship without a forge." He also had to sacrifice some poor goats for the pur-

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pose of using their skins as leather, but his invention did not at first work so well as Moffat's; and he says he found bellows-making to be a more difficult task than he had imagined, but, like Moffat, he was not a man to be defeated. "I took," he says, "my old English bellows to pieces, not, as the tale goes, to look for the wind, but to ascertain the reason why mine did not blow as well as the others. I had not proceeded far when the mystery was explained, and I stood amazed at my own ignorance." But to a man like Williams, such knowledge of ignorance becomes an insight into the means of real power; so he created his bellows, and after telling the story as to how the rude contrivance was made, he says, "With this we did all our iron work, using a perforated stone for a fire-iron, an anvil of the same material, and a pair of carpenter's pincers for our tongs; as a substitute for coals, we made charcoal from the coco-a-nut and other trees" (exactly as our English forefathers used to do, as we shall see presently, four hundred years since in Sussex). "The first iron the natives saw worked excited their astonishment exceedingly, especially the welding of two pieces together. Old and young, men and women, chieftain and peasant, hastened to behold the wonder; and when they saw the ease with which heated iron could be wrought, they exclaimed, 'Why did not we think of heating the hard stuff also, instead of beating it with stones?'" And thus the story pursues its way, in an interesting manner, to the building of the ship, "The Messenger of Peace." The exclamation of wonder indulged by the natives at the achievements of a wit surpassing their own, seems like that of those who, when Columbus made the egg stand, exclaimed, "Why, we could have done that!" So simple seem great discoveries and inventions when wit and thought, hand in hand, make plain the difficult way.

Some years since there was a singular exhibition, at Ironmongers' Hall, of all the curiosities especially connected with the ancient methods of fabrication in iron, and in other departments more or less immediately connected with the conquests of the Smiths. It was spoken of as "a brilliant show," "a lovely vision." Goldsmiths, filigree and jewel workers of the times of old, had the choicest of their works brought together: the ring of Alfred the Great, the shield of Henry the Eighth, the gauntlets of Charles the First, and a crowd of such curiosities. Perhaps, among them all, no objects better deserved a place than the clumsy apparatus we have described, with which Robert Moffat in barbarous Africa, and John Williams among the savages of the South Seas, attempted successfully to initiate rude men in the first arts of civilisation, and gave to those who read the story some idea of the wonder and the worship with which the world's fathers surrounded the forges of the first workers in fire.

How different are such stories as these, however, from some others in which, in other scenes, the blacksmith was the servant of superstition and cruel idolatry. In Tyerman and Bennett's "Missionary Voyages round the World," written from their notes, by James Montgomery, we have the account of the great festival of Doorga, in Benares, where the chief sacrificer was a blacksmith, always chosen for his supposed immense strength. The feat of the sacrifice was the leading of a large buffalo into a sacred enclosure, fixing his neck and legs by strong stakes, and with one blow severing the head from the body. Perhaps

it will indeed seem to our readers an immense feat of strength. The missionary travellers stood and saw the spectacle:—"For a few moments the blacksmith looked with intense earnestness towards the image of Doorga, as though imploring the weight of her ten arms to aid his two. Every eye was fixed on him, and every face expressed a strange solicitude for the sequel, because if the head of the victim does not fall under one blow the omen would be deemed most unfortunate, and the sacrificer would be driven away with scorn and cursing from the place. The blacksmith, however, on this occasion failed not. Having deliberately taken aim, and lifted the terrible instrument, one moment we saw it gleaming through the air, and the next it was crimsoned and reeking with the blood from the slain beast, the head of which was immediately caught up and presented to the idol. Meanwhile the people shouted and danced, hugged in their arms, and crowned with a chaplet of leaves, the brawny blacksmith and slaughterman as the benefactor of their country." Surely such stories stand in strong contrast: superstition using the power of the smith to enslave, and Christianity going forth with its mild manifestations of its yet overwhelming strength to set free the mind of man. Livingstone found blacksmiths in the deep, far-off, remote valleys and villages through which he passed on the shores of the Zambezi and its tributaries. "Iron ore," he says, "is dug out of the hills, and its manufacture is the staple trade of the southern highlands. Each village has its smelting-house, its charcoal-burners, and blacksmiths. They make good axes, spears, needles, arrow-heads." But Christianity gives another and higher purpose to the labour of the smith as it passes on its benevolent way, and *Cruce et Aratro*, by the Cross and the Plough, has been from a very early time the motto and symbol of the Christian missionary. The genius of Christianity calls into existence, or gives purpose and plan to, the genius of industry.

But these anecdotes of Moffat and Williams remind us of the importance of the bellows to the smith. After the discovery of fire, and that man can employ it to his purposes, the next thing was to discover some means for blowing upon it, in order to strengthen it. The first pair of bellows was a very rude instrument. Wooden bellows were invented by the Germans, and we have been struck by their apparent likeness to the machine created by John Williams. We read of a certain Louis Psanuen-schmid, who came from Thuringia, settled in the forest of Hartz, and began to make wooden bellows; but he would disclose his method of manufacture to no one but his son; and the son and the grandson in succession made bellows for generations for all the inhabitants of the forest. It is said from them the useful invention spread abroad among other nations.

Varieties.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION.—In those towns which are willing to guarantee the defrayment of all necessary expenses, the University of Cambridge offers to establish one or more courses of thoroughly educational lectures, to be supplemented by an examination, and the granting of certificates to those who pass it satisfactorily. The subject of the course is left to the choice of the town itself, and when stated to the University, a man of known proficiency in that subject is drafted off to take

up his residence in the midst of his provincial scholars. He is merely a scholar or fellow of his college, and works under the immediate direction of the University itself. Each course consists of twelve weekly lectures, supplemented by classes, in which further and fuller instruction is given in the subject of the course. The lectures are progressive, and strictly educational, so that at the end of a course an accurate, though necessarily limited, acquaintance may have been formed with the subject in hand. In some cases the same subject is made to extend over two terms, comprising twelve lectures in each, and there is some probability of the University giving even further opportunities to students of becoming thoroughly acquainted with one branch of knowledge by making a course extend over three years. Literature, history, and various branches of science, are thus made accessible to those whose desire for knowledge prompts them to become attendants at the lectures. On entering the room appropriated for this purpose, each student is supplied with a carefully-prepared syllabus of the chief points that will be brought into notice during the lecture of the day, and to this are appended several questions to which answers are requested. These answers are sent in to the residence of the lecturer, by whom they are read and returned to their writers, accompanied by careful corrections and judicious comments. These questions are also sometimes made the subject of explanatory remarks at the classes, so that every opportunity is given for improvement on the part of the students. At the end of the course, those who are anxious to put their newly-acquired knowledge to the test, or to do credit to the teaching they have received, offer themselves as candidates for examination. The papers set at these examinations are prepared by a Cambridge examiner, and to him the answers are sent for correction. The success or failure of each candidate is communicated by the local secretary, and the result made publicly known through the medium of the local newspaper. Each successful candidate then receives a certificate, either first or second class, according to the degree of merit with which the examination has been passed. These examinations are, we need hardly say, optional, though all the students are earnestly requested to offer themselves as candidates; at the same time, they are gratis, and those who have taken tickets for the whole course of lectures and classes are called upon for no further fee if anxious to supplement their work by the stern test of an examination. It will be seen from the foregoing remarks that, by attendance for several years at these University extension lectures and classes, a superior education may be acquired by those whose limited advantages have given them only an elementary acquaintance with some few branches of knowledge. To those who, thanks to the Education Acts, have learned to read and write with proficiency, but have been forced early in life to give up study for the sake of earning a livelihood, these lectures must indeed prove a boon; and it is generally arranged that they shall take place in the evening, so as to be accessible to all classes of workers. It is, indeed, especially with a view to bringing education within the reach of the artisan and the labourer that these lectures have been set on foot, and for that purpose a uniformly low rate of fees forms one of the distinctive features of the scheme. For the absurdly small outlay of 2s. a man is admitted to a whole course of lectures, given by a high-class teacher, and rendered at the same as intelligible and simple as is compatible with the subject in hand. For 6s. he gains admission to the classes as well as the lectures, and is also entitled to send in his name for examination, and to receive a certificate if able to pass it with credit; that is to say, these are the fees of admission to the lectures with which we are personally acquainted; each town arranges its own scale of charges, and they may in some instances be higher, but they are never raised so high as to be beyond the means of a working man. Although but a limited number of towns have hitherto availed themselves of the unusual advantages offered by the scheme of University extension, there is every reason to hope that, as the public becomes more thoroughly acquainted with it, the area of its beneficence may spread, and that it may meet everywhere with the success it deserves.—M. I.

LEISURE HOUR INDEX.—Each yearly volume of the "Leisure Hour" is complete in itself, and has its own detailed list of contents. Frequent requests, however, have been made for the production of a general index, so as to facilitate reference to the vast body of matter that has accumulated during many years. One of these inquirers speaks of the "Leisure Hour" as a "valuable work of reference, and miniature library in itself;" and another, the head master of a public school, says, "As a 'Cyclopædia' of useful information, we have found immense service rendered to us by the 'Leisure Hour'—the only desideratum in regard to the past volumes of which is a good general

index," by which we would be saved many a weary hunt after the treasures which are contained in it." This index of the first twenty-five volumes, from the commencement in 1852 till the end of 1876, is now published.

LOVE STORIES ENDING WITH MARRIAGE.—To the publisher of "Good Words," Dr. Norman Macleod, as editor, wrote:—"I do so hate those eternal love stories—this everlasting craving after sweetheart! I wish they would marry in the first chapter, and be done with it. Is there nothing to interest human beings but marriage? What a fuss to make about those two when in love!"

RITUALISM IN 1842.—I began this letter the other day in the country, but being now an idle man with nothing to do, I have not had time to finish it. We came to town to go to Windsor afterwards but met him from house to house. His success here was beyond anything great, and he will, I trust, have carried away with him impressions of England as favourable as those which he left in England of himself. The only people who found fault with him are the Puseyites, the new Catholic sect who have sprung up in our Church, and who saw with disgust and uneasiness the arrival of a Protestant monarch who is known to wish to bring about some kind of connection between his Protestant Church and ours.—*Lord Palmerston's Letters*.

CRICKET SCORES.—What are the bowlers about? Cricket will soon become an impossible game unless better bowlers are forthcoming, or the size of the wickets is enlarged, or the dimensions of the bat reduced. It is becoming a rare thing now for a county match to be played out, and the scores, in some instances, are enormous. In the last Surrey and Sussex match the runs made an aggregate of 715, and the Sussex v. Gloucestershire match was drawn, after three days' play, though the runs were only a few short of 800. A score of 300 is now a common thing.

Eggs.—There has been a decrease this year in the importation of eggs. The value was £1,706,738, against £1,770,782. If the decrease arises from greater production in England, so much the better. Poultry farming ought to be more encouraged.

POST OFFICE STATISTICS.—During the twelve months of 1875 the Post Office was entrusted with the custody and transmission of no fewer than 1,008,392,100 letters, of 80,116,300 post-cards, and of 279,716,000 book packets. The whole population wrote on an average thirty-one letters each, in the proportion of thirty-five for each inhabitant of England and Wales, of only twenty-six for Scotland (a proportion at which we are astonished—and that must be explainable by the enormous amount of business letters from England), and of no more than thirteen for Ireland. The statistics of the Dead-Letter Office reveal a curious uniformity in carelessness or in stupidity. One out of every 232 letters which were posted failed of its destination, and was accordingly sent to that dreary receptacle. Nevertheless, nine-tenths of them were sent back to the writers, who were thus apprised of their mistake. The tale of their contents is surprising in the extreme. Of the whole number there were 464 which contained sterling value in the shape of cheques or notes to the amount of £7,000. All of these were posted without any address being inscribed on the envelope. The force of carelessness surely could no further go. Be it extreme hurry or be it mere dazedness of mind, the thing seems unintelligible, and, save that it was certified upon the unimpeachable and most exact authority that belongs to it, one would have great difficulty in believing it. From similar carelessness there were 65,000 postage-stamps found loose in different post-offices, while miscellaneous articles to the number of over 13,000 were lost, because the envelopes in which they were contained had given way, or the articles had escaped from them.—*Daily Review*.

CENSUS OF YOUNG MEN.—A Parliamentary return, ordered on the motion of Mr. Henley, states that it is estimated that in the middle of the year 1851 the population of the United Kingdom comprised 2,049,541 young men aged 18 and under 26, and that in 1871 the number was 2,201,927, an increase of less than 7·5 per cent. in the 20 years. In England and Wales the number in 1871 (including army, navy, and merchant seamen abroad as well as at home) was 1,616,226, showing an increase of more than 21·5 per cent. since 1851; in Scotland the number in 1871 (not including persons abroad) was 227,340, an increase of not quite 7 per cent.; but in Ireland the number in 1871—namely, 358,361 (not including persons abroad), showed a decrease of more than 29 per cent. Emigration takes away a larger share of young men than of other classes of the population.

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